



## Nicol Mere School EYFS Policy 2025-2026

This policy was developed in line with the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage.

### VISION

At Nicol Mere we pride ourselves in giving our children the best possible start to their school journey. We recognise every child as an individual and support them to reach their full potential and achieve excellent learning outcomes. Our dedicated team of Early Years Practitioners have high expectations and care deeply about the children in our school and form close relationships with children and families.

We aim to

- Inspire a love of learning.
- Ensure that all children feel happy, safe, valued, respected and included.
- Encourage children's confidence, sense of responsibility and respect for all people.
- Develop children's awareness of diversity in the community and respect of others values and customs.
- Provide children with opportunities to develop their physical, intellectual, language, emotional and social skills.
- Work in partnership with families.

This vision will be delivered through a broad, ambitious curriculum with high quality, challenging learning opportunities which are both child initiated and adult lead. Our practitioners are always ready to listen, communicate, role-model, assess, explain, demonstrate, question and push the next steps of the child's learning that is appropriate to the individual child. Our high quality learning environment aims to support children's emotional development as well as cognitive development. Neutral colour schemes are used to promote a calm environment with a family feeling. High quality, open ended, gender neutral resources are used to promote independence, imagination, problem solving, communication as well as enhancements to provide challenge.

### STATUTORY FRAMEWORK OF EYFS

We adhere to the 'Statutory Framework of the EYFS' and the four overarching principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- *Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured*
- *Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships*
- *Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.*
- *Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See "the characteristics of effective teaching and learning" at paragraph 1.15). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).*

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven curriculum areas, using play as the vehicle for learning;
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers;
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment and by the children's own ideas and interests;
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated, child-initiated and adult supported;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.



## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM

Our curriculum encompasses seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving.

These are called the prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social, and emotional development.

Four areas help children to strengthen and apply the prime areas.

These are called the specific areas:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

Weaving throughout the EYFS curriculum are three **Characteristics of Effective Learning**.

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

These elements underpin how we reflect on each child's development and adjust our practice accordingly. Supporting children in their individual learning behaviour and observing the context of children's play is essential.

We use Development Matters (published September 2020) along with children's individual needs, interests, and development to plan a challenging and enjoyable curriculum.

## OUR PRACTISE

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

We create medium term plans based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning. Our continuous provision areas are enhanced to support our topic, literacy and numeracy however we remain flexible and enhance areas based on children's interests and children's responses. Our planning is continually evaluated by all staff to ensure that children's individual 'Next Steps in Learning' and personalised learning needs are met. Children engage in whole class and small group activities alongside their independent learning. The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS framework: *'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'*.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those which are planned by adults. During children's play, the adults in class interact when appropriate to stretch and challenge them further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and build these into our practice. We create a stimulating learning environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and outdoors as far as possible.

### Assessment at the start of the Reception Year

Children are assessed using the NFER baseline assessment.

### Assessment at the end of the Reception Year

At the end of the year the EYFS profile is completed. The level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals.

Teachers moderate with SLT and Year One teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development, and their readiness for Year One.

Teachers must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').



This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements.

### **SAFETY INCLUDING SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE REQUIREMENTS**

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at Nicol Mere Primary School. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety.

In Reception we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.
- Risk assessments are reviewed annually.

Nicol Mere Primary School has robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable for their role.

The Child Protection Policy is in place to ensure the safety of all stakeholders at Nicol Mere Primary School. Backing up this policy is a dedicated safeguarding team. All staff are trained to use CPOMS safeguarding system to log any concerns regarding any aspects of safeguarding and behaviour. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns.

### **SNACK**

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, milk and access to water throughout the day.

Several EYFS staff hold a Paediatric First Aid qualification, meeting the statutory requirements of the EYFS. Food is prepared safely to minimise the risk of choking, in accordance with the Food Standards Agency's *Early Years Food Choking Hazards* guidance and Department for Education recommendations. Children are closely supervised during eating and drinking and are seated facing staff during snack and mealtimes.

### **INCLUSION**

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve the Early Learning Goals.

We work closely with the parents/carers of our high achieving children to ensure that their individual needs are met and their talents fostered. We ensure that these children are challenged appropriately to reach their full potential.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so we work closely with parents/carers and outside agencies. We provide additional intervention either individually or in groups. Children needing extra support have daily 'nurture group' to help with individual needs.

### **THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS**

We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

- Holding information evenings before the children start school;
- 1:1 meetings with parents prior to the children starting school to discuss their child's interests and needs.
- ASQ questionnaires and readiness for school questionnaires filled in to record parental viewpoint.



- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;
- Daily planner to communicate;
- Class dojo to celebrate excellent behaviour and academic success as well as a way to communicate;
- Autumn term parents evening to discuss how their child has settled and baseline results. Summer term parent's evening to discuss progress and transition to Year One.
- Valuing parents' contributions to Class Dojo learning journal;
- Inviting parents into school for workshops including reading and letters and sounds.
- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading record books;
- Providing a weekly 'Reception Round-Up' sheet to inform parents of the learning that has taken place that week, how to extend the learning at home and what the children will be learning the following week;
- Providing weekly letters and sounds sheets to show parents the phonemes the children are working on and how to support the learning at home;
- Providing parents with an annual mid-year report and an end of year summary report detailing achievements and their child's EYFS profile;
- We also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work and experiences.

### **TRANSITIONS**

Transitions are carefully planned for and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. At times of transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings. Parents have 1:1 sessions to discuss their child's needs and interests. Teachers visit local nurseries to introduce themselves in a familiar environment and provide transition booklets for nurseries to help familiarise the children. Children attend introductory sessions, one with their parents and stay and play visits. We set up class dojo July so parents can begin sending photographs and videos of their child for practitioners to get to know the children and we send videos of teachers reading stories for the children.

At the end of the EYFS, our Reception teacher meets with the Year 1 teacher to moderate early learning goals, liaise with them and discuss the individual children and their specific needs. The children's assessment data and writing books are sent with them to Year 1 so that their new teachers are able to plan for their 'next steps in learning' from the moment they enter their new class. Children spend time in the Year 1 classroom ensuring that they are familiar and comfortable with their new teacher and are 'next year ready'. Children with additional needs have extra transition sessions.

### **MONITORING OF THE EYFS**

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. The EYFS Leader is responsible for monitoring provision, teaching and learning and children's progress. Information is shared with the SLT and the reception team as appropriate and any necessary actions are taken.

All adults in the reception team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. We have weekly reception team meetings to discuss planning, assessment and intervention needs. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets.

Appendices:

- Home visit/Starting School questionnaire



- Link to the 'Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/974907/EYFS\\_framework\\_-\\_March\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf)
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